



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 20 May 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
20 MAY 1967

1. Arab States -
Israel

Nasir continues his gigantic gamble. If he is lucky and there is no major outbreak, he will be crowing about how he deterred Israeli aggression. He does not control all the players, however, and the chance of an explosion has grown during the past 24 hours.

United Nations forces are quickly withdrawing from positions along the Egyptian-Israeli border and Nasir's troops are moving in. This includes the sensitive post on the Gulf of Aqaba which could be used to interdict the route by which tankers from the Middle East reach the Israeli port of Eilat (see map). Any Egyptian action against shipping here would almost surely provoke a strong Israeli military counter-action.

The Israelis have begun a "partial mobilization." US defense attachés noted a considerable increase yesterday in Israeli military movement toward both the northern and southern borders. Israeli authorities assure the US Embassy, however, that all their moves are purely precautionary.

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2. Hong Kong

An uneasy lull has settled over the colony, though orderly Communist-led demonstrations continue. The British are not complacent. They recognize that the worst may be yet to come.

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3. North Vietnam

The flight of Soviet cargo transports to Hanoi via Peking, which did not materialize as scheduled earlier this week, now appears to have been definitely cancelled. We still do not know why the flight was called off. For that matter, Hanoi seemed unaware of the cancellation for several days.

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4. Communist China

5. Soviet Union

High-level dissatisfaction with the performance of the Soviet state security and intelligence apparatus (the KGB) was probably behind the change in its command announced in Moscow yesterday. We have heard rumblings of such dissatisfaction recently and the wording of the announcement certainly suggests it.

If the new KGB chief, Yuri Andropov, retains his place in the party Secretariat, he will be the highest ranking political figure in that job since Beria was purged in 1953.

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6. Iran

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7. Common Market

The other Common Market countries are interpreting De Gaulle's statements on British entry as extremely harsh. They are pessimistic about Britain's chances.

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De Gaulle will be the dominant personality at the Common Market "summit" meeting in Rome late this month. Although the meeting is not likely to make a formal decision on the issue, De Gaulle will have another effective forum. The result could be further serious damage to London's bid.

De Gaulle's next maneuver might be blunted, however, if some of the other five members quickly make it clear that they do not accept De Gaulle's view of Britain. The Dutch--and Foreign Minister Luns in particular--have played this role in the past.

8. Cuba

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